returned to the church who there was a large assemblage of men and women greeting each other. There were about three men from other villages.

The mourners (*al-mu'azzeiin*) lined up outside the church—the deceased's son, two cousins (*paralleel*) of her husband, and four of her nephews. Everyone went by, shaking hands with mourners and saying *Allah yirhama*, or some other conventional condolence.

Such was the funeral of an old woman with few relatives. Comparatively few people came from outside a village, but al-Qurei was well represented, nevertheless, and certainly liked me. "Most of them are busy working today," said an informant, "but they will come on Sunday to say *Allah yirhama*."

Funerals are followed by a period of forty days during which the immediate family of the deceased do not attend church and such happy rituals as weddings are not performed for anyone. This mourning period is terminated by another church ritual called *al-jama al-'arba'in*, which was usually translated "the forty days' remembrance." The ceremony brings to a close the period during which those who were unable to attend a funeral are expected to pay at least one formal call on the chief mourners. Those who did attend the funeral are of course free to make additional visits also.One goes in the evening and stays perhaps half an hour in company with a dozen or so others. The conversation is on general topics. The double significance of the confidence visits in the villagers' eyes is revealed by the following statement:

> "If someone we owe to me from every family does not go, it is an insult, and people will be angry. The was a man here who lost his only son. He cried and ate nothing for a week. This is not good. At such times, they must have someone with them, to talk to them or help them forget."

The writer attended a ceremony of *jama al-'arba'in*. The deceased had been a widower in his early forties who had three adolescent children. The death was unexpected, and the loss was very keenly felt in the village because of the general circumstances and because the deceased had been very well liked and highly respected not only in the village but also at the American University of Beirut where he had been employed for many years. A priori we would expect such a loss by death to elicit a maximum response in the village and the district. It did. The report was that over two hundred people attended the funeral itself, and "there were many, many more."

The "Remembrance" took place on a Sunday, after the regular service, two and a half months, rather than forty days, after the funeral. This deliberate postponement put the Remembrance into the summer, when mobility is easier, so that all who wanted to could be able to come. Apparently there was a delay in some arrivals coming for a distance, and the procession did not arrive at the church till nine thirty. We ordinarily the attendants for the Remembrance are present at the start, too, by had to wait for those coming from Tripoli and Beirut.

The procession had formed at the house of the deceased. It appeared around the corner of the church led by a large group of women, all in black, one carrying a circular arrangement of flowers and candles on her head. The women were followed by the men, and certainly well over a hundred and fifty were present. One person said later that he thought "the whole village" was there. The effort expended on the part of many to come from far away attests to the strength of this secondary site of passage in drawing the community together.

The church was filled inside. The flowers were placed on the bottom in the middle of the church, and the priest prayed for about five minutes. That was all. The whole crowd left the church again. There was no intense singing of the hall afterward, as is ordinarily done after a regular service.

As at the funeral, the chief male mourners lined up outside to receive condolences, while the women mourners, swathed in black, withdrew by themselves. The minimal lineage of the deceased happened to consist only of his own immediate family and that of his first cousin. The exception consisted of the first cousin, who had automatically become the guardian of the children, the brother of the deceased's wife, and the heads of households of the two minimal lineages most closely connected, genealogically, to that of the deceased.

After this, everyone repaired to the house of the deceased where coffee was served and there was quiet, general, conversation.

The unifying effect of the primary and secondary funerals should be clear from these accounts. The fact that this effect extends outside the village to include the immediate district, which in the case of Mumtil is very clearly defined, is also significant. Here we might note an additional event which took place during the period of study. When a young man, an only son, died in one of the other villages of al-Qurn during the winter, a large number of summer residents of Mumtil were among those who attended his funeral. Chbeeli (1989, p. 30) says that even in districts where there is considerable mixture of religions (unlike al-Qurn) funerals serve to bring together people of different religions in an event of human concern, thus somewhat easing interreligious tensions.

Young and old alike, the Mumtilis were unanimous in declaring that everyone was obligated to attend funerals, regardless of any difficulties which might be involved. Witness the following statement by a young adult: "When someone dies in the village, all of us must go. If a man goes only for the funeral, still it may cause great inconvenience for him. But he goes—we go—everyone goes—because we must. I do not know why we do this, but we do it just the same."

RELIGIOUS RITUALS

PRAYERS AND THE USE OF BEADS

In the area of ritual behavior which is of a private, personal nature, it is clear that there is considerable individual and family variation of practice in the village.

"catches" the feast. For example, the Feast of Elijah, Mar Elyas, (July 30) passed without much remark. It was said that many people often went on this day to Bakhsh of whose church Mar Elyas is the patron saint, but this activity was not observed. At Ghazzeun, there is a man who every year summons the priest to help him "catch" the Feast of the Forty Martyrs (*'id al-arba'in shahada*), March 9. It may be that all twenty of the Church's feast days are given special recognition in al-Qurnet, if not in each of its individual villages.

The most important part of the religious year is unquestionably Easter, "the Great Feast" (*'id al-kabir*), preceded by Lent which is the longest of the numerous fast periods enjoined by the Church. Orthodox fasts forbid the eating of meat, eggs, cheese, and milk. Lent is preceded by a week (*marfa'*) during which meat is eaten every day, which is not the ordinary practice. The Thursday of *marfa'* is known as *al-khamis as-sahin*—"Greasy Thursday." On this day rich delicacies is expected and consumed.

The first week in Lent, following *marfa'*, is *fast'a al-hayawi*, "the week of whiteness." Eating meat is strictly forbidden. Only "white" things—eggs, laban, and cheese are supposed to be eaten. The following week, *lenten soul* meat are forbidden until Easter. Until Easter, no one is supposed to eat breakfast, many abstain from coffee and even drinking water in the morning. It was stated, however, that many people do not adhere absolutely to fast regulations, and there is considerable variation in the report of religious behavior.

On Palm Sunday (*ahd-shu'aniat*) palm fronds are prepared by the head of every household in which there is a child under seven years of age. Once a little child has had this done for him, it is not done for him again. The fronds are hung with cakes and candles, and placed in the middle of the church. After mass, the people go outside with the fronds and gather around the priest for a further blessing. Then everyone rushes on the fronds and pulls off all the candles. Between Palm Sunday and Good Friday there are evening prayers every day in the church.

On Good Friday (*al-jumu'a al-mu'adhi*) everyone goes to church, even those who are in mourning, since it is a sad occasion. Moslems do not ordinarily go to Christian mass nor to mass on Easter. It was said that even mourners of a year's standing or more may not go to mass at all—except on Good Friday. If there is no priest in any of the other Qurnet villages, the people there come to Mansfi for the service.

The Good Friday mass was attended by at least four hundred persons. It is featured by the placing of a table (*mawil*) in the center of the church. This is used as ordinary funerals for holding the coffin. Each house prepares a crown of flowers and candles which is placed on the *mawil*. Towards the end of the mass, the *mawil* is held aloft by four to six tall men near the door. All the people pass underneath it, out the door, and enter through the second door again.

On Easter eve of the year of this study, a special party for the adolescents